

REMARKS

The present Amendment cancels claims 1, 4-8, 11-14 and 16-19 and adds new claims 20-33. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 20-33.

Claims 1, 6, 8, 13, 14, 17, 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Haszto (U.S. Patent No. 6,192,338) in view of Erb (EP No. 1189417 A2); and claims 4, 5, 7, 11, 12 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Haszto in view of Erb and further in view of Bryan (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0146015 A1). As indicated above, claims 1, 4-8, 11-14 and 16-19 were canceled. Therefore, these rejections are rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

As per the above, new claims 20-33 were added directed to features of the present invention not taught or suggested by any of the references of record particularly Haszto, Erb or Bryan whether taken individually or in combination with each other.

The present invention as now recited in new claims 20-33 is directed to a service providing system which includes at least two service providing apparatuses, each of which processes information to provide a service, a service requesting apparatus for processing information to request one of the at least two service providing apparatuses to provide their service and a service mediating apparatus coupled to the at least two service providing apparatuses and the service requesting apparatus via a network.

According to the present invention, the service requesting apparatus receives a voice input indicating an instruction as to a service requested by a user of the service requesting apparatus. The service mediating apparatus specifies an appropriate one of the at least two service providing apparatuses which performs a process corresponding to the instruction and specifies a speech recognition engine, from a plurality of speech recognition engines, which recognizes the voice input from the user based on the specified one of the at least two service providing apparatuses. The specified one of the at least two service providing apparatuses processes information to provide its service based on the speech recognition performed by the specified speech recognition engine.

Thus, as per the above, the unique features of the present invention is the use of a service mediating apparatus which mediates between a plurality of service providing apparatuses so as to determine the appropriate one of the service providing apparatus which performs a process corresponding to a particular instruction received from a user. Therefore, in the present invention the service mediating apparatus performs a selection function to select an appropriate one of the service providing apparatuses based upon a user instruction. Accordingly, the service mediating apparatus does not provide a service in of itself, it simply specifies (selects) one of the plurality of service providing apparatuses appropriate to perform a process in accordance with the user instruction.

The above described features of the present invention now more clearly recited in the claims are not taught or suggested by any of the references of record

particularly Haszto, Erb and Bryan whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner in the Office Action.

Haszto teaches a natural language knowledge server. However, at no point is there any teaching or suggestion in Haszto of the above described service mediating apparatus nor the providing of a plurality of service providing apparatuses, the appropriate one of which can be specified by the service mediating apparatus as in the present invention. As clearly illustrated in Figs. 1-3 of Haszto, a client provides a voice instruction to, for example, an airline web server which then ultimately generates a signal to the network knowledge server and the airline web server 28 so as to provide information according to the service provided by the web server 28, namely airline flight reservations. However, as clearly taught in Haszto a plurality of service providers are not provided since only the providing of a single service (flight reservation) is contemplated therein. Thus, in Haszto there is no need for a service mediating apparatus which selects the appropriate one of the service providers based upon the user input as in the present invention.

Therefore, Haszto fails to teach or suggest at least two service providing apparatuses each of which processes information to provide a service and a service mediating apparatus coupled to the at least two service providing apparatuses and the service requesting apparatus via a network as recited in the claims.

Further, Haszto fails to teach or suggest that the service mediating apparatus specifies an appropriate one of the at least two service providing apparatuses which performs a process corresponding to the instruction and specifies a speech recognition engine, from a plurality of speech recognition engines, which recognizes

the voice input from the user based on the specified one of the at least two service providing apparatuses as recited in the claims.

The above noted deficiencies of Haszto are not supplied by any of the other references of record particularly Erb and Bryan whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, combining the teachings of Haszto with one or more of Erb and Bryan still fails to teach or suggest the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in the claims.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in new claims 20-33 are not anticipated nor rendered obvious by any of the references of record particularly Haszto, Erb and Bryan whether taken individually or in combination with each other.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that claims 20-33 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 20-33 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (501.41888X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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